

CHINATOWN/LEATHER DISTRICT CENTRAL ARTERY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**MEETING SUMMARY – PARCEL 24, MEETING #3, August 4, 2003
ST. JAMES CHURCH, 125 HARRISON AVE., CHINATOWN**

Stephanie Fan, Co-chair of the Chinatown / Leather District Central Artery Advisory Committee, began the meeting with a brief overview of the previous two meetings. She explained that this was the first meeting to discuss potential uses for Parcel 24 and that there wouldn't be any conclusions after the night's meeting. Fan mentioned that the Hudson Street Coalition was planning a Design Forum on August 9th, and she hoped that people would be open to other ideas at that forum.

Fan described the site map that was on each of the two tables people were sitting at, and Te-Ming Chang, Manager of the Urban Design Technology Group at the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), described the other tools at the table. At each table were general building footprints from existing housing developments, open space examples, parking configurations, as well as a range of retail spaces and community spaces that could be placed on top of the site maps for reference.

Each table was provided a list of questions pertaining to uses (see attachment), and a community facilitator as well as a representative from the BRA and the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority (MTA) facilitated discussions.

List of comments (no particular order) that were made at Table A:
This group discussion was conducted in Cantonese and English.

Housing:

- Site used to include about 300 units of housing.
- Low-income, affordable housing should be built and be available to working class.
- Chinatown lacks condos and other owner-occupied units.
- Zoning calls for 80' – 100' but it would be possible for more height near Kneeland St. (equal to adjacent building) and lower moving towards Tai Tung St.
- 2-bedrooms should be built with some 1-bedrooms and 3-bedrooms.
- 3- and 4- bedroom units in other buildings tend to go to students and not families.
- Townhouses at lower end and multi-bedroom units on higher level.
- Units should be owner-occupied with some affordable and others market rate.
- There is sufficient elderly housing and there should be more for younger people and families.
- There's a difference between "subsidized" and "affordable" units.
- Buildings should be as tall as possible to ensure largest number of units.
- Elderly housing should be considered since some elderly housing is being converted.
- Housing should be built with respect to the annual Chinatown resident income

Community Space:

- Community meeting space.
- Library.
- Computer center.
- Day care center.

Retail:

- If there is retail on Kneeland, there's no need on Hudson St.
- There used to be retail on Hudson.
- Bookstore

Parking:

- Underground.

Open Space:

- Community garden.

List of comments (no particular order) that were made at Table B:

Housing:

- 1/3 or 1/2 “affordable” rental or owner-occupied with some subsidized and some market rate.
- Townhouses may not work because not enough units.
- Probably mid-rise (i.e., height of 75 Kneeland St.) for feasibility.
- Lower-income and not too tall.
- Key memory of former residents was “community” and “family” – more family-oriented units vs. senior or Single-Room-Occupancy.
- Mixed-income with rental and ownership.
- Should target current residents.
- More 3-bedroom units.
- Affordable home-ownership with deeds preserving the long-term affordability.
- As much housing on the site compared to other uses (except library).
- Higher massing near Kneeland and stepping down towards Tai Tung.

Community Space:

- Library branch – ideal location.
- Temple.
- Day care.

Retail:

- Not really a need for convenience store – those housing units would become too isolated and self-sufficient.
- No more restaurants.
- Smaller mom-and-pop retail – easier to rent.
- Laundromat.
- Dry cleaning/ tailor.
- No arcades (video game).
- Used to have some retail along Hudson.

Parking:

- Below-grade.
- Difficult with sewer line.
- Some public parking.

Open Space:

- Thoroughfare or pedestrian access through middle of the site to connect to open spaces on Parcels 25-27.

There was a request for more information regarding housing and income patterns in Chinatown. The BRA would work on getting that type of information. Fan thanked everyone for starting the conversation about uses for Parcel 24.

The next Parcel 23D (the Chinatown / Leather District Central Artery park) meeting will be on September 8th at 6:00PM at St. James Church, and the next Parcel 24 meeting will be on September 22nd at 6:00PM at St. James Church.